

A Fawcett Publication

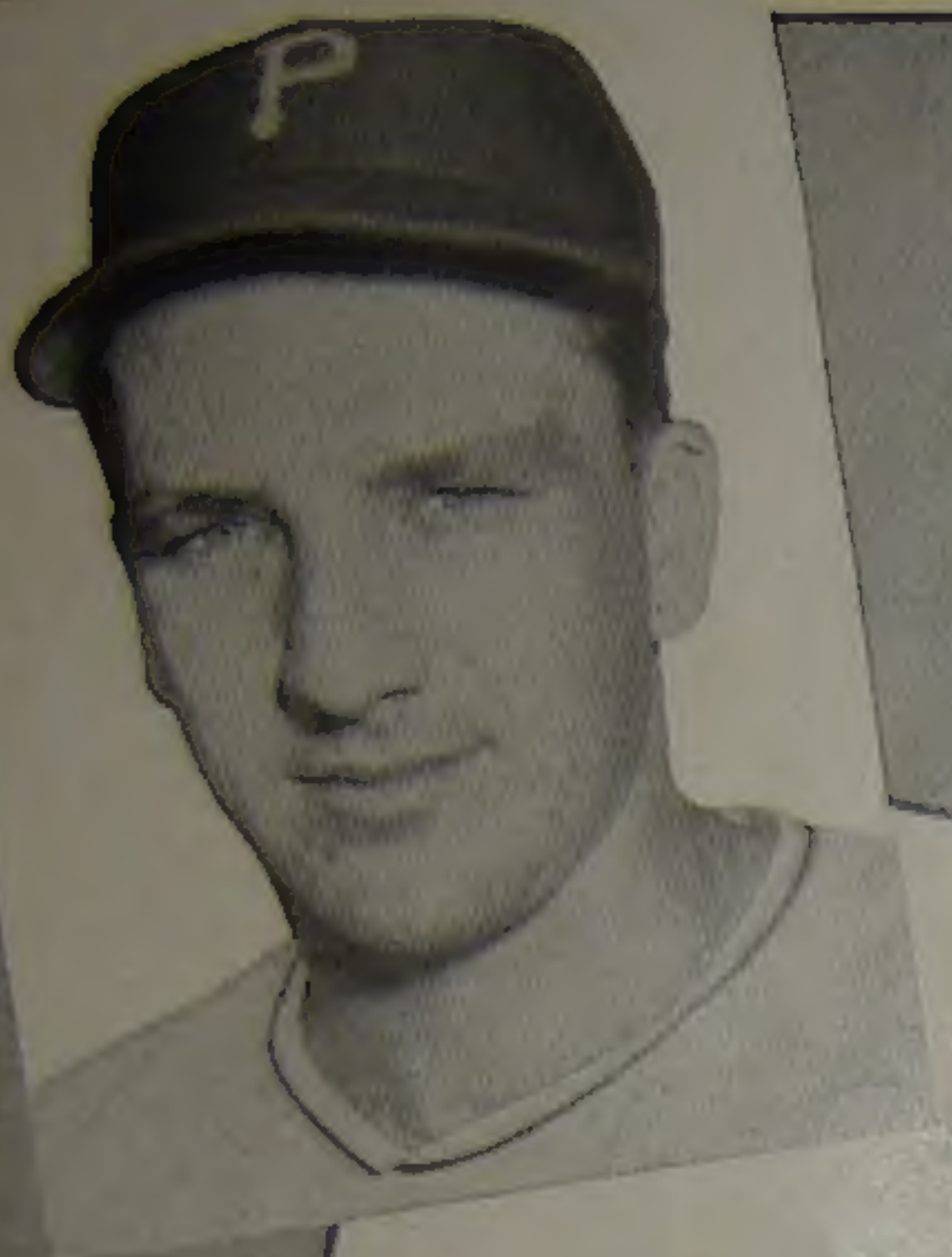
Ralph Kiner

HOME
RUN
KING

10¢

TRUE LIFE STORY OF THE FAMOUS
PITTSBURGH SLUGGER





HEY, KIDS!

HERE'S A FAN MAIL
LETTER FROM
RALPH KINER TO *YOU!*



R A L P H
FORBES FIELD

K I N E R
PITTSBURGH, PA.

Dear Fans:

I've often wished that I could thank each of you personally for the inspiration you've given me. It is gratifying to have my efforts rewarded by your loyalty. I'll try to do my best for you always.

Baseball is a great game, but to become part of it clean living is essential. This applies to any career you might choose.

Thanks, fans. Keep playing the game hard. Swing for the fences. Touch all the bases. Don't go for bad balls---or bad habits.

Sincerely,
Ralph Kiner

RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

Ralph KINER

Home Run King



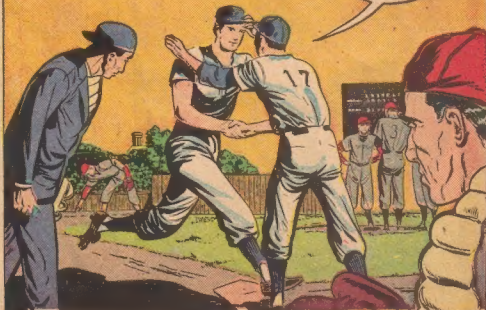
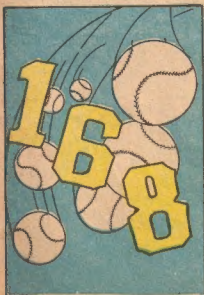
Ralph Kiner, heroic home run slugger of the Pittsburgh Pirates, is the most dynamic figure in baseball today!

Pitchers cower as he comes to bat, and thousands cheer as he cannonades his mighty home runs. But, only a few years ago, he was a small boy, selling newspapers to support his widowed mother... the person who has done the most to help him in his rise to fame and fortune!

Ralph hit more home runs in his first four major league seasons than any other player in history, capturing the home run crown four times in as many years!

Twice Ralph has hit four homers in four consecutive times at bat!

YOU DID IT AGAIN, RALPH!



Shortly after World War I, Lieutenant Ralph Macklin Kiner returned to his home at Santa Rita, a mining town in New Mexico! There he met and married nurse Beatrice Grayson, who had served overseas with the AEF and on Oct. 27, 1922, their lusty young son, Ralph Jr., was born!

Mr. Kiner bought a bakery in Santa Rita! When Ralph was three...

CATCH THIS, RALPHIE!

I GOT IT, DAD!



Ralph helped his father deliver bread and rolls to Indians on a nearby reservation...

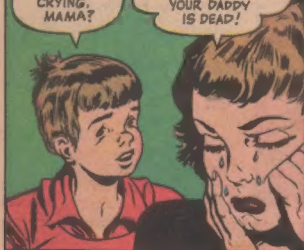
HERE'S YOUR BUNS, CHIEF!



But the two pals were separated when Ralph was four!

WHY ARE YOU CRYING, MAMA?

WE'RE ALONE, RALPH! YOUR DADDY IS DEAD!



DON'T WORRY, MOTHER -- I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU ALWAYS!

I KNOW YOU WILL, RALPHIE!



The lonely mother and son moved to Alhambra, a suburb of Los Angeles! There Mrs. Kiner found work in a hospital!

I'LL BE NURSING ALL DAY, MRS. JONES! DON'T LET RALPH OUT IN THE RAIN!

I WON'T, MRS. KINER!



Even then young Ralph loved baseball!

SAFE AT SECOND!

YOU WON'T BE SAFE IF YOUR MOTHER CATCHES YOU!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

When Ralph was seven, he helped support his mother!

STRIKE!

THERE'S YOUR PAPER, MRS. O'BRIEN!



One afternoon after school...

HEY, RALPH, BABE RUTH HIT HIS FIFTIETH HOME RUN!

FIFTY HOMERS? WOW! WATCH ME SOCK ONE, BOB!



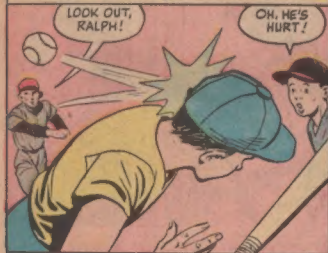
POPUP! YOU'LL HAVE TO DO BETTER THAN THAT TO BEAT THE BABE, RALPH!



Soft ball proved too tame for Ralph. Tall for his age, he and his chum, Bob Bodkin, joined older boys in hardball games. One day...

LOOK OUT, RALPH!

OH, HE'S HURT!



At Bob's nearby home, Mr. Bodkin applied ice packs to the swelling on Ralph's head.

THERE, RALPH... GUESS YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH BASEBALL, EH?

I'LL NEVER HAVE ENOUGH BASEBALL, MR. BODKIN!



GOOD BOY! BUT YOU NEED SOME LESSONS. I USED TO PLAY SEMI-PRO MYSELF. TAKE MY GLOVE, RALPH. PRACTICE WITH IT!

GEE! THANKS, MR. BODKIN!



For three years Mr. Bodkin coached Ralph and Bob on the corner lot!

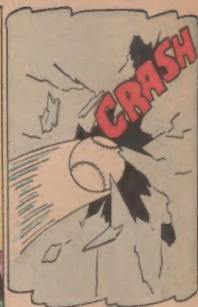
GO TO YOUR LEFT, RALPH!

RALPH'S DOING FINE, DAD!

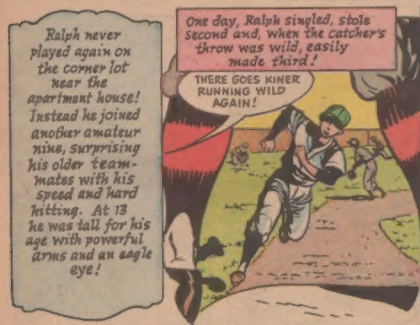


RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

Soon Ralph was playing regular ball games in the corner lot. One day...



YOU'RE LYING!
NO KID YOUR
AGE CAN HIT
A BALL THAT
FAR!



Mrs. Kiner reluctantly yielded! That Saturday, Ralph reported to Manager Dan Crowley of the Junior Yanks in Los Angeles!

WEAR THESE, KINER!

SAY, THEY'RE SNAZZY PANTS, MR. CROWLEY!



THEY OUGHT TO BE! YOUNG JOE DiMAGGIO, THE NEW YANKEE STAR, WORE THEM AT THE STADIUM IN NEW YORK LAST SEASON!

JOLTING JOE'S PANTS? WOW! HOPE THEY FIT ME!



And Joe DiMaggio's pants DID fit Ralph to a T! In his first time at bat as a Yankee Junior he whaled a long drive!

OVER THE FENCE!
A THREE-HUNDRED-FOOT HOMER!



Ralph entered Alhambra High School in September, 1936! For a year he was just another Freshman, studying hard! Then, in September, 1937...

MA, I'M A SOPH NOW! I'M GOING OUT FOR VARSITY TEAMS... FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL... AND ESPECIALLY BASEBALL!

I WISH YOU WOULDN'T PLAY SO MUCH BALL, RALPH!

SEPTEMBER 1937

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | |

But Ralph refused to heed his mother's advice! Playing halfback against Whittier...

TOUCHDOWN FOR KINER!



Ralph's 68-yard run beat Whittier, 20 to 14!

That evening...

RALPH, I WISH YOU WOULDN'T PLAY SUCH A ROUGH GAME!

BUT GEE, MOM, I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING UNTIL BASEBALL TIME!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

That winter, Ralph was the leading point-scorer on Alhambra's basketball five! Against Long Beach...

TWENTY-SIX POINTS!
NICE GOING,
RALPH!



Starring on the track team, Ralph sprinted, raced, broadjumped, hurled the javelin and discus in the Southern California High School Pentathlon!

KINER SECOND
IN DISCUS
THROW!



But when spring came...

YEA,
BASEBALL!

LET'S GO, BOYS!
THAT'S MY
GAME!



The Alhambra Moors practiced that day on the football field. As Alhambra's coach, Bob Purcell and Manager Dan Crowley of the Yankee Juniors watched --

KINER HIT THAT ONE THREE
HUNDRED AND TWENTY
FEET, DAN!

HE'LL BE A
BIG LEAGUER
SOMEDAY,
BOB!



Cathedral High arrived at Alhambra for a practice game with only eight players!

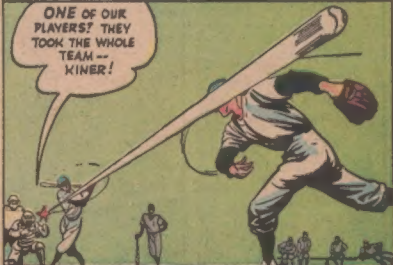
WHY NOT BORROW
ONE OF OUR
PLAYERS?

GREAT, PURCELL!
I'LL TAKE RALPH
KINER -- AND
BEAT YOU!



Ralph played third base for Cathedral against his own teammates!

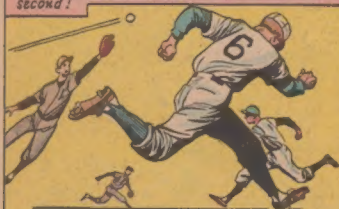
ONE OF OUR
PLAYERS? THEY
TOOK THE WHOLE
TEAM --
KINER!



Ralph's homer, triple, and two singles
beat Alhambra, 9 to 8!

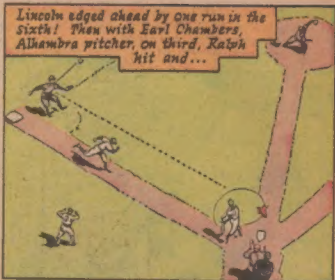
RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

Lincoln High took a two-run lead in the third inning of a vital game! But with two on in the fourth, Ralph powdered a screaming liner over second!



Ralph's double tied the score!

Lincoln edged ahead by one run in the sixth! Then with Earl Chambers, Alhambra pitcher, on third, Ralph hit and...



Chambers slid home safely with the tying run, but --

With the score still tied and Lincoln coming up for their eighth, Coach Purcell stopped Ralph as he made his way toward his position at third base.

CHAMBERS SPRAINED HIS ANKLE AND WE HAVEN'T GOT A PITCHER LEFT, RALPH! WARM UP!

OKAY, MR. PURCELL!

Ralph had pitched in practice, but not during a regular game.

Ralph was wild, passing four Lincoln batters in the next two innings! But with men on bases --

STRIKE THREE!

KEEP IT UP, RALPH!



And, in the tenth...



Ralph's homer broke up the ball game, Alhambra winning, 4 to 3!

RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

Ralph hit a thunderous .406 at Alhambra in 1938! He couldn't get enough ball under his belt... any kind of ball! In September he wanted to be a Red Grange, in December a Nat Holman, in March a Babe Ruth!

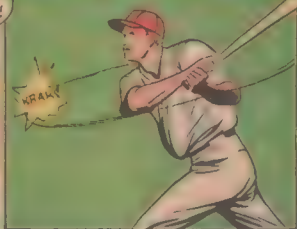
That fall, Harry Johnston, a close family friend, drove Ralph to Los Angeles!

I WOULDN'T PLAY FOOTBALL OR BASKETBALL THIS YEAR IF I WERE YOU, RALPH! STICK TO BASEBALL AND YOU'LL BE A STAR!

THANKS FOR THE ADVICE, MR. JOHNSTON!



That winter, Ralph played second base on the Sacred Heart team! With the score tied 2 to 2 in the deciding game of the CYO season...

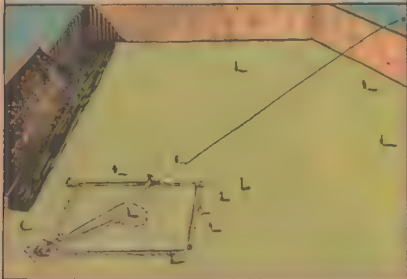


... Ralph crashed a screaming double to score the winning run!



Ralph led Sacred Heart with a .370 average!

Bigger and stronger than ever, Ralph pounded home runs in almost every game for Alhambra High in 1939!



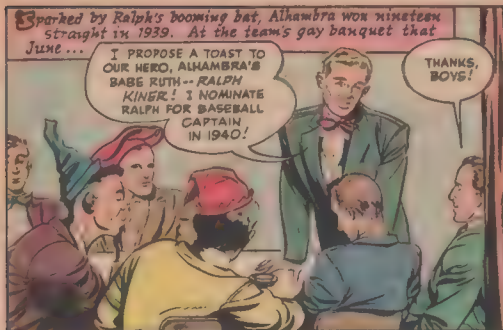
Ralph began to study baseball! seriously recording details of each game in a looseleaf notebook! After each home run he visited the school gymnasium!

WHAT DO THOSE MARKS MEAN, RALPH?

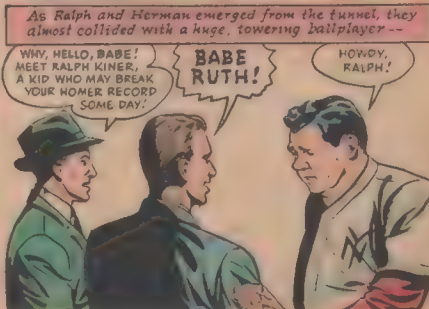
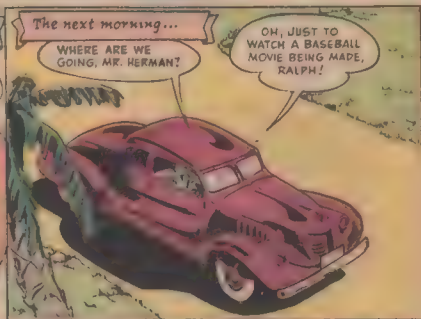
THAT'S HOW I KEEP TRACK OF MY HOMERS! I'VE HIT ELEVEN SO FAR THIS SEASON!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING



Determined to succeed, Ralph played baseball around the calendar. In the summer, he was still a Yankee Junior! In the winter, Sacred Heart's flashy shortstop and power hitter. His name now appeared on sports pages from San Diego to San Francisco!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

Thrilled by his meeting with his boyhood hero the immortal Bambino, Ralph followed Ruth and Herman to the batting cage where scenes were being filmed for 'Pride of the Yankees,' the movie life story of Lou Gehrig.

NOTICE HOW BABE RUTH HANDLES HIS BAT, RALPH AND THE GRACEFUL WAY HE SWINGS!

AND HE HASN'T PLAYED BALL FOR YEARS, MR. HERMAN!



THERE SHE GOES, RALPH! IF I COULD ONLY HIT LIKE THAT!



Later...

YOU'VE GOT THE WRISTS AND ARMS THAT MAKE A HOME RUN HITTER, RALPH! PLAY AS MUCH BASEBALL AS POSSIBLE! PRACTICE MORNINGS, AFTERNOONS AND EVENINGS! YOU'LL GET THERE SOME DAY!

I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR ADVICE, BABE!



Spurred by his meeting with Babe Ruth, Ralph played brilliantly as Alhambra's season began!



WHAT A CATCH!

Against Glendale High, Ralph doubled four times in four times at bat!

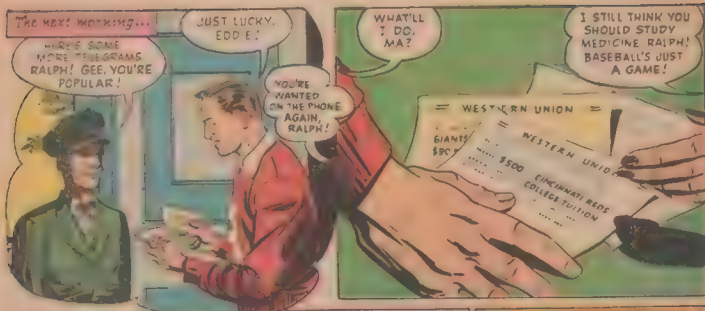
THIS IS WHERE I CAME IN!



Then, against Mark Keppel High, Ralph starred at shortstop for eight innings. In the ninth he took the mound, fanning the next three batters to win the championship game!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING



Ralph invited Thurston and Johnston to dinner that night!

MAYBE OTHER TEAMS HAVE MORE PENNANTS THAN THE PIRATES, RALPH, BUT WE'LL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO PLAY BIG LEAGUE BALL IN A YEAR OR TWO.

I LIKE THAT IDEA, MR. THURSTON!

THAT'S RIGHT, RALPH. TEAMS WITH BIG FARM SYSTEMS KEEP BOYS 'N THE MINORS FOR YEARS.

It was a fine dinner and "Sloppy" Thurston, as the Pirate scout was called, told baseball stories until far in the night. Mrs. Kiner left for the hospital where she was working and...

HERE'S THE PIRATES' OFFER, RALPH -- A BIG LEAGUE TRIAL NEXT YEAR... THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS NOW AND FIVE THOUSAND MORE IF YOU MAKE GOOD!

I KNOW I'LL MAKE GOOD, MR. THURSTON!

TAKE IT, RALPH.

And the next afternoon...

CONGRATULATIONS RALPH! YOU WILL REPORT TO THE PIRATES' TRAINING CAMP AT SAN BERNARDINO NEXT SPRING, RALPH!

I CAN HARDLY WAIT FOR THAT DAY, MR. THURSTON!

An hour later...

I WAS WRONG WHEN I TOLD YOU NOT TO BECOME A BALLPLAYER RALPH! NOW I'M SO HAPPY, DEAR!

I'LL MAKE YOU EVEN HAPPIER, MOTHER, WHEN I MAKE GOOD!

Later that week Ralph took his mother for a walk. They strolled before a house on one of Alhambra's most beautiful streets.

THIS IS OUR NEW HOME MOTHER! WE'RE BUYING IT WITH MY BONUS CHECK!

RALPH YOU'RE THE BEST SON A MOTHER COULD HAVE!

Ralph finished his season with Alhambra in a blaze of glory, batting a miraculous .576! He was a member of the Southern California All-Star High School team and played semi-pro ball that summer! During the winter he batted .520 on the undefeated CYO team and was in fighting trim when February, 1941, rolled around!

Ralph Kiner, the gifted eighteen-year old high school star, had never ventured far from the modest home in which he had grown to manhood! Now he girded himself for the struggle against crafty foes on the diamond and off! And, in his search for fame, he would wander far from home... from the Atlantic's rocky shores to the trackless wastes of the war-torn Pacific!



On February 24, 1941, Ralph joined other Pirate rookies at the San Bernadino training camp where Manager Frank Frisch began workouts!

I WANT TO SEE HOW FAST YOU BOYS CAN RUN FROM CENTERFIELD TO THE PLATE!

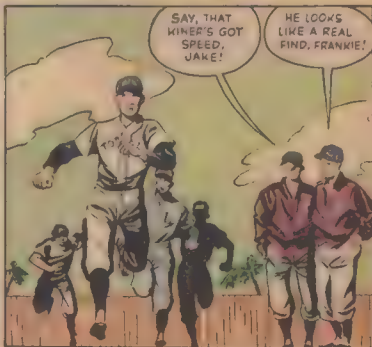
OKAY, MR. FRISCH!

LET'S GO, BOYS!



SAY, THAT KINER'S GOT SPEED, JAKE!

HE LOOKS LIKE A REAL FIND, FRANKIE!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

In his first batting drill, Ralph belted three balls over the distant fence!

AND LOOK AT HIM SLUG THAT BALL, TOO GREEN YET, THOUGH!



I KNOW YOU WANT TO PLAY IN THE BIG LEAGUES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE RALPH BUT YOU NEED MORE EXPERIENCE! I'M SENDING YOU TO ALBANY!

I UNDERSTAND, MR. FRISCH!



Ralph journeyed across the continent to Barnwell, S.C., camp of the Albany Senators of the New England League. There, in a practice game, he hit two thundering homers, one three hundred and sixty feet, the other three hundred and seventy-five!

Eager to make good in his professional debut, Ralph hit at a bad ball in his first time up against Binghamton!

I GOT IT! THEY THROW CURVES IN THIS LEAGUE, KID!



Albany scored early, but in the ninth Binghamton rallied and tied the game, 3 to 3!

YOU CAN MAKE IT! DON'T SLIDE!

THAT TIES IT UP!



Emerson Roser, clever Binghamton hurler, retired the next eight Senators to face him, fanning the first two men in the twelfth. Manager Specs Torporcer approached Ralph.

DON'T BITE AT ROSER'S TRICKY SLOW STUFF, RALPH! WAIT FOR HIS FAST BALL!

ROSER HASN'T THROWN ME A FAST BALL YET, MR. TORPORCER!



But Ralph, anxious to hit, swung at the first pitch!

STRIKE ONE!



Ralph realized now that this wasn't like high school baseball! Play was faster, pitchers smarter, the stakes higher! To steady his nerves, he called for time out!

"ME MY SHOES ARE SLOW! COME ON ROOKIE! SWING! YOU WON'T LOSE! SEE! ANNNNN!"

And on the next pitch...

SAY... THE KID CAN CLOUT!



Ralph's three-hundred-eighty-five-foot homer, his first in organized baseball, won the game for Albany, 4 to 3!

After the game, Ralph dressed quickly and...

SHALL I SEND THIS AS A NIGHT LETTER, MR. KINER?

NO I WANT MY MOTHER TO GET IT RIGHT AWAY!

ISN'T THAT JUST LIKE RALPH!

WESTERN UNION
HELLO MOM. HIT MY FIRST HOMER TODAY. WE WON 4-3. LOVE, RALPH

And, since that first happy day, Ralph has wired his mother the good news every time he has hit a home run!

Sn! Ralph often failed to hit low outside curves, and worked hard on his weakness!

I'LL GET IT DOWN, YET!

But Ralph had hit ten home runs by July 30, 1941!

SOME SOCK RALPH!

I WENT FOUR HUNDRED FEET!



In an August game against Hartford, Ralph made six consecutive hits!

Ralph's Record--1941:

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Hits | 142 |
| Doubles | 23 |
| Triples | 7 |
| Home Runs | 11 |
| Runs Batted In | 66 |
| Slugging Average | .416 |
| Batting Average | .279 |

Again with Albany in 1942 Ralph wasted no time hitting a homer in the season's first game against Binghamton!

LOOK! KINER TAGGED ONE!

I GOT IT!



Two days later against Hartford, Ralph hit his first grand slam home run!

YOU HIT THE JACKPOT, RALPH!



Ralph drove in six runs that day soaking a homer double and single as Albany won 8 to 4!

Ralph now played left field regularly but when Manager But Collins was injured, he took Collins' place at first base.

MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHERE HE PLAYS HE'S GREAT!



Inspired by Ralph's power hitting, Albany won the Eastern League flag!

WE'RE CHAMPS!

AND RALPH'S THE BOY WHO DID IT!

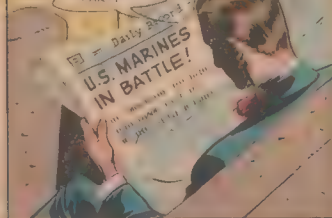


Ralph's Record for 1942:

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Hits | 124 |
| Doubles | 24 |
| Triples | 7 |
| Home Runs | 14 |
| Runs Batted In | 75 |
| Slugging Average | .428 |
| Batting Average | .257 |
| * Tied for Second Place | |
| ** Led League | |

The baseball season was over, but on other fields grimmer battles raged! As Ralph journeyed westward in September 1942...

WE'VE GOT TO WIN THIS ONE, TOO... AND I'M GOING TO DO MY PART!



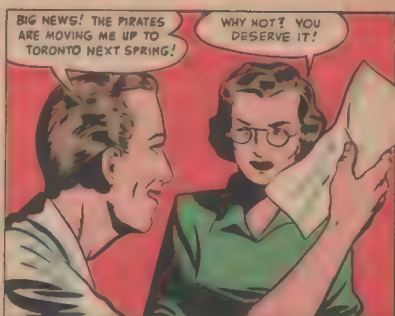
A few days later in Los Angeles...

YOU'RE THE AIR CORPS TYPE KINER, BUT FIFTEEN HUNDRED OTHERS HAVE ALREADY SIGNED UP! WE'LL NOTIFY YOU WHEN WE NEED YOU!

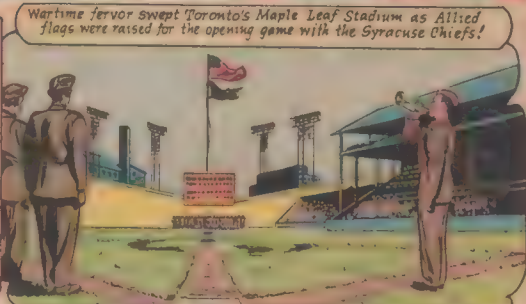
THANK YOU SIR-- JUST MAKE IT SOON!

RECRUITING STATION ...





In February, 1943, Ralph trained at the Pirates' wartime camp at Muncie, Indiana, then joined the Toronto Maple Leafs of the International League! His hitting in practice games was sensational!



In his first time at bat, on the very first pitch, Ralph met the ball cleanly!

Ralph's drive bulleted four hundred feet over the fence and hit the roof of the Air Force barracks, the longest hit ever seen in Toronto!



Batting over .300, Ralph was coming into his own as a hitter, splashing singles, doubles, triples as well as home runs!

SAF!



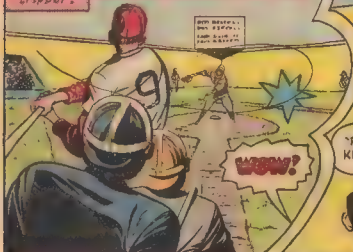
On May 7, Ralph received a telegram and --

MOTHER? I'VE BEEN ORDERED TO REPORT TO THE NAVY IN JUNE! YIPPEE! IT'S ABOUT TIME!

THERE GOES OUR PENNANT!



In the eighth inning that day, Ralph bade baseball farewell with a mighty round tripper!



WOW!

'RAY, KINER!

KINER'S LAST HOME RUN!

360!

READ The Globe and Mail

Ralph reported for boot training at San Luis Obispo, California...

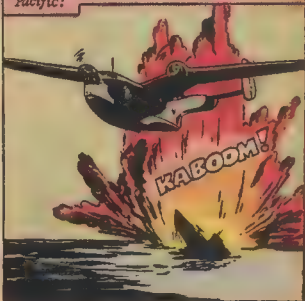
YOU MEN HOLD THE DESTINY OF OUR NATION IN YOUR HANDS! IT'S UP TO YOU TO CRUSH THE POWER OF THE ENEMY'S FLEET!

Winning his Ensign's stripe, Ralph was assigned to the bomber patrol from Diamond Head near Honolulu in 1944!

TAKE OFF AT 1400, ENSIGN! PROCEED DUE SOUTH AT A CONSTANT SPEED OF 300, THEN PILOT HER EAST AFTER TEN MINUTES!

AYE, AYE, SIR!

For many months as a pilot of a Navy PBK with a thirteen-man crew, Ralph hunted down Japanese submarines over the vast Pacific!

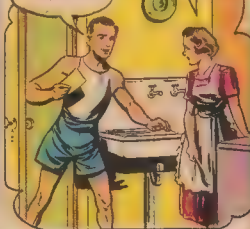


Then came V-J Day - and the long way was over! Ralph had taken his duties seriously.

He had not played a single game of ball in thirty months. That winter, he got into shape as outfielder on a semi-pro team and in February eagerly awaited his return to baseball!

MOTHER -- I'M JOINING THE PIRATES AT SAN BERNARDINO NEXT WEEK! WHAT LUCK!

FOR THE PIRATES, YOU MEAN!



Later that week, Ralph rocketed a 446-foot clout in the ninth to lick the White Sox again!

ANOTHER ONE! HE MUST HAVE THE HOME RUN - PATENTED!



Ralph's hitting was the sensation of the Pirate camp! He banged five straight safeties against Hollywood! A few days later against the White Sox...



GRAND SLAM!

Four innings later, Ralph boomed another homer! He drove in ten runs that day, two less than the all-time record as Pittsburgh won, 23 to 3!

As the exhibition tour ended, reporters queried Pirate Manager Frankie Frisch!

WHAT ABOUT KINER? WILL HE BE A REGULAR, FRANKIE?

KINER'S MADE THIRTY-FOUR HITS IN SIXTY-FIVE TIMES AT BAT, AND HE'S HITTING .523 ON THIS TOUR! HE'S MY REGULAR CENTER FIELDER!



A few minutes later...

I'M GLAD RALPH'S GOING TO PITTSBURGH, MR. FRISCH! BUT WHO'LL COOK HOME MEALS FOR HIM AND DO HIS LAUNDRY AS I DO!

I'LL COOK AND WASH FOR HIM MYSELF, MRS. KINER -- IF HE KEEPS ON HITTING HOME RUNS!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

On April 16, 1946, Ralph entered a big league ball park for the first time... and played his first big league game! At St. Louis...

YOU'RE PLAYING BIG BOYS NOW, ROOKIE!

STRIKE THREE!



Howie Pollet, Card southpaw ace, fanned Ralph in the first and again in the third!

Gripped by nervousness, Ralph got off to a miserable start!

GET A BASKET, KINER!



The Pirates opened their home season at Forbes Field on April 19! Before the game, Pittsburgh fans argued about Ralph Kiner, the Pirates' prize rookie.

AW, KINER'S JUST ANOTHER FLASH IN THE PAN! HE STRIKES OUT TOO MUCH!

YOU'RE DEAD WRONG! SOMEDAY HE'LL BREAK BABE RUTH'S HOMER RECORD!



In the next inning...

BACK TO TORONTO, BUSHER!

GO GET A JOB, YOU BUM!

YOU'RE GRACEFUL AS AN EARTH-QUAKE!



And the very next day, as Ralph faced Howie Pollet again...

KEEP YOUR CHIN UP, RALPH! SOMEDAY YOU'LL MAKE THEM EAT THEIR BOOS!

I DON'T BLAME THEM, MR. FRISCH! I'M PLAYING AWFUL BALL! BUT I'M NOT QUITTING!



NOT BAD, ROOKIE, BUT DON'T MAKE A HABIT OF IT!

A HOMER FOR KINER! RAH!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

That first homer was indicative of a great career to follow. On May 23, against the Phillies at Shibe Park, Philadelphia, with three Pirates on base in the first, Kiner rocketed his first major league grand slam homer!

400 FT.

JACKPOT HOMER FOR KINER!

In the third, Ralph lined a 390-foot double!

And in the seventh, Ralph almost cleared the roof in left field for his second homer of the day!

FOUR HUNDRED FEET! THAT SHOULD COUNT FOR TWO HOMERS!

Long suffering Pirate fans perked up as Ralph went on a batting spree between June 21 and July 7!

"KINER HITS 7 HOMERS IN 16 DAYS! MAY BREAK PIRATE SEASON RECORD!"... KINER'S MY BOY!

BUT WE'RE STILL IN THE SECOND DIVISION!

In New York, Ralph met veteran Johnny Mize, the National League's home run champ!

YOU'RE GIVING ME A GOOD FIGHT FOR MY TITLE, RALPH!

YOU MEAN I WAS! I'VE BEEN IN AN AWFUL SLUMP LATELY, JOHNNY!

Tied with Mize in late September with twenty-two homers each, Ralph invaded Ebbets Field, lair of the boisterous Dodgers!

YOU WON'T HIT OUR KOBY HIGGLEY. YA BUM!

MAYBE NOT! BUT I'LL BE TRYING!

EBBETS FIELD

With two on in the ninth, Ralph smashed his twenty-third homer off Kirby Higby!

THE BUM DID IT!

YOU'RE THE NEW HOME RUN KING, RALPH!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

Ralph's Record for 1946:

Champion Home Run Hitter of the National League.
Hit at least one homer in each league park.
Broke Pirates' club record of 22 set by Johnny Kizzo in 1938.

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Hits | 124 |
| Doubles | 17 |
| Triples | 3 |
| Home Runs | 23 |
| Runs Batted In | 81 |
| Slugging Average | .430 |
| Batting Average | .247 |



When Ralph reported at the Pirates' Miami Beach training camp in March, 1947, he found a new friend - the mighty Hank Greenberg, long the home run terror of the American League!

YOU'VE GOT THE MAKINGS OF A GREAT STAR, RALPH!

I HOPE I'LL BE IN YOUR CLASS SOMEDAY, HANK!



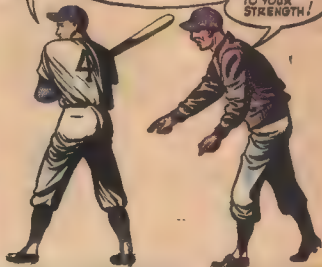
Veteran Hank and youthful Ralph engaged in a friendly hitting battle the next day?

YOUR HITS GOING FIFTY FEET FARTHER THAN MINE DID, HANK!



IS THIS RIGHT, HANK?

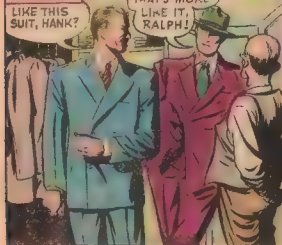
NOT QUITE, RALPH - STAND CLOSER TO THE PLATE! RELAX...EVEN WITH TWO STRIKES ON YOU, YOU CAN STILL HIT A HOMER. MAKE THE PITCHERS PITCH TO YOUR STRENGTH!



After practice, Hank said: "Always look your best, Ralph - someday the fans will think of you as their ideal on the field and off. Let's go to my tailor."

LIKE THIS SUIT, HANK?

THAT'S MORE LIKE IT, RALPH!



As the Pirates opened the 1947 season at Forbes Field...

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF YOUNG KINER, HANK?

HE'LL DRIVE IN ONE HUNDRED RUNS THIS YEAR, AND SOMEDAY HE'LL BREAK THE BABE'S SIXTY-HOMERS RECORD IN ONE SEASON!



And Ralph soon lived up to Hank's glowing prediction. Between June 7 and 9, he clubbed seven homers... by July 4, he was the season's sensation -- nineteen circuit clouts in seventy games!



Ralph was now second only to Johnny Mize in the home run derby. He was walloping the shorter hits, too, hitting .321 with fifty-seven runs batted in!

Ralph became the idol of Pittsburgh bobby soxers!

HIT A HOMER FOR ME, RALPH!

AND ONE FOR ME-- THEN ONE FOR MY SISTER!

GOSH, I'D BREAK THE BABE'S RECORD IN ONE DAY AT THAT RATE!



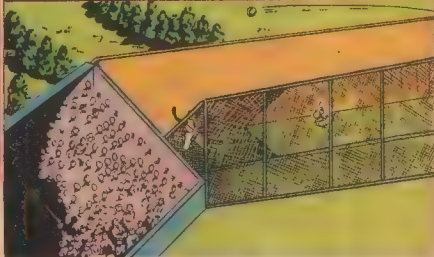
Ralph had to hire a secretary to answer fan mail!

HOW MANY LETTERS TODAY, MISS MAMAUX?

A HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOUR, RALPH! YOU'RE CERTAINLY POPULAR!



On July 24, Ralph hit two home runs. The second one, his twenty-fourth, broke his own Pirate record, made in 1946!



Yet, in New York, Big Jawn Mize was pounding homers at an even faster clip!

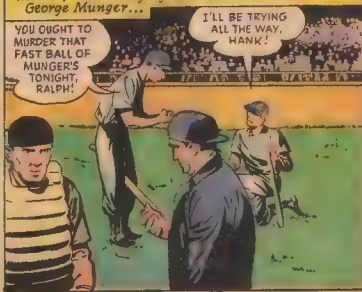
THAT'S TWENTY-EIGHT, JOHNNY! KINER WILL WILT AT THIS PACE!



On August 15, Ralph was still four big homers behind Mize! As he waited for his turn at bat in the first inning against Card twirler George Munger...

YOU OUGHT TO MURDER THAT FAST BALL OF MUNGER'S TONIGHT, RALPH!

I'LL BE TRYING ALL THE WAY, HANK!

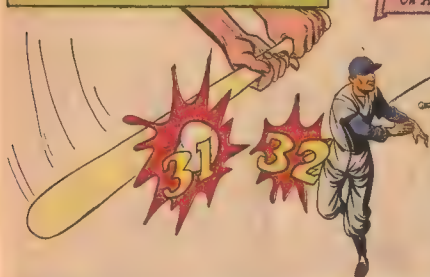


RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

And Ralph did tee off! That night, he thundered two homers!

As Ralph went to bat in the first inning on August 16 against the Cardinals...

WE WANT A HOMER!
WE WANT A HOMER!
WE WANT A HOMER, RALPH!

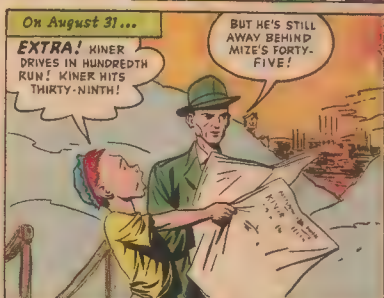


And Ralph delivered, dynamiting homers. In three official times at bat he crashed three round trippers!

On August 31...

EXTRA! KINER DRIVES IN HUNDREDTH RUN! KINER HITS THIRTY-NINTH!

BUT HE'S STILL AWAY BEHIND MIZE'S FORTY-FIVE!



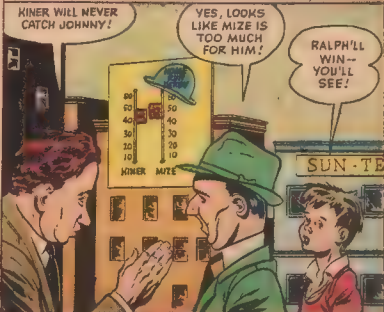
By September 10, Ralph had fallen still farther behind Mize! In a downtown Pittsburgh street...

KINER WILL NEVER CATCH JOHNNY!

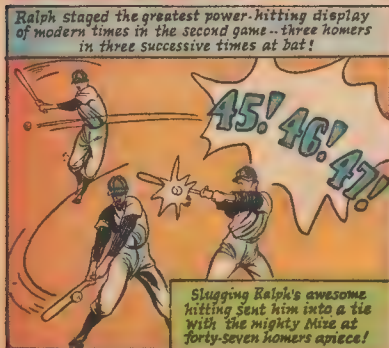
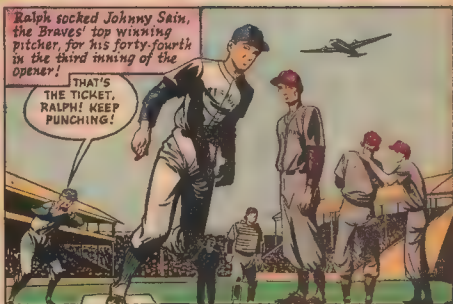
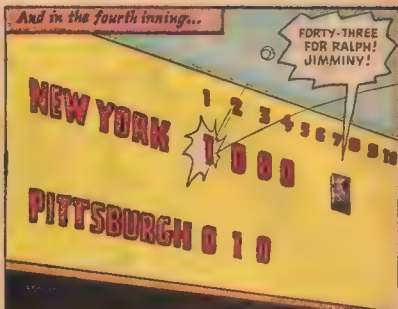
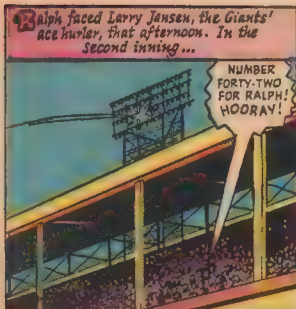
YES, LOOKS LIKE MIZE IS TOO MUCH FOR HIM!

RALPH'LL WIN-- YOU'LL SEE!

Ralph's feat tied Lou Gehrig's record of four homers in four at-bats, Ty Cobb's five homers in two games, Pony Lazzari's six homers in three games and seven in four games!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING



Records Smashed by Ralph, September 10 and 11, 1947.

Tied Foxx's four homers in
double header.

Again tied Lazzeri's six
homers in three games.

Tied Mize's season record:
twice hitting three homers
in game.

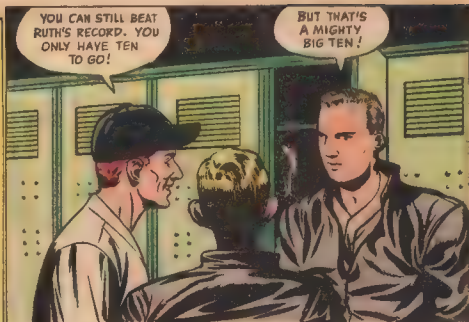
* Most times two home runs or
more in a game 10

Most home runs in four
consecutive games 8

Tied Ruth's record most home runs
in two consecutive days 6

* Most home runs in one week --
8 in Seven games.

* Most total bases, double header - 19
(* NATIONAL LEAGUE RECORD ONLY)



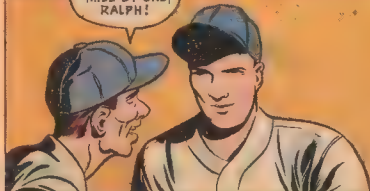
But big John Mize was still very much in the
race. On September 17, he hit two for the
circuit!

THAT'S FORTY-NINE
FOR YOU, JOHN. YOU'RE
ALL EVEN WITH
KINER!



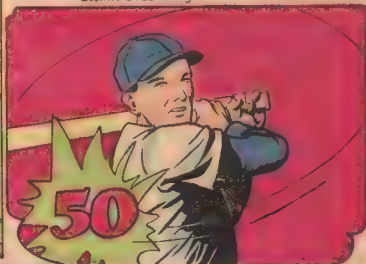
Although Ralph was deliberately walked by Card
pitchers three times on September 23, he blasted
No. 51!

YOU LEAD
MIZE BY ONE,
RALPH!



Yet two days later, Mize also hit No. 51 -- and shared
the National League homer title with the
sensational rookie!

On September 18 Ralph became a baseball
immortal! His fifty home runs had been equalled
only by the great Bambino, Jimmy Foxx, Hack
Wilson -- and Ralph's pal and teacher--
Hank Greenberg!



Ralph's Thrilling 1947 Record:

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Hits | 177 |
| Doubles | 23 |
| Triples | 4 |
| Home Runs | 51* |
| Runs Batted In | 127 |
| Total Bases | 361** |
| Putouts | 390*** |
| SLUGGING AVERAGE | .639** |
| Batting Average | .313 |

* Tied for League Lead.
** Led League.
*** Led League Outfielders.

RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

One day in February, 1948, as Mrs. Kiner was about to leave for the hospital where she was still nursing...

COME WITH ME, MOTHER. I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING!

BUT, RALPH, I HAVE TO HURRY!



YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO HURRY AGAIN -- THIS CAR'S YOURS AND YOU'RE THROUGH WORKING!

RALPH, YOU ARE THE MOST WONDERFUL SON IN THE WORLD!



When Ralph reported for 1948 spring training, he met Bill Meyer, new manager of the Pirates!

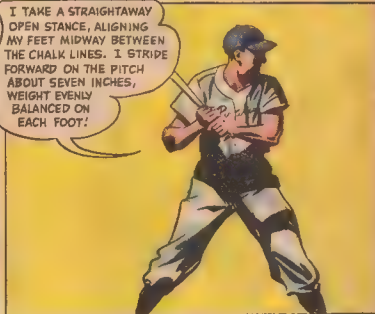
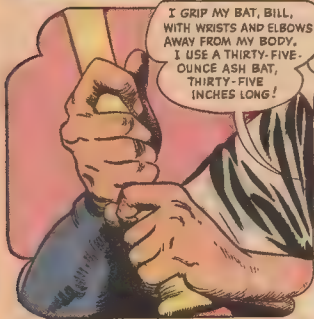
RALPH, LET'S SEE HOW YOU SMACK THOSE HOMERS!

SURE, BILL!



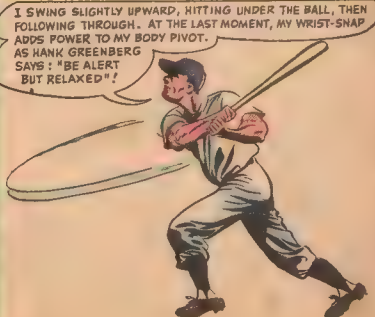
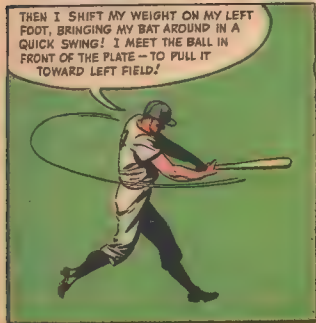
I GRIP MY BAT, BILL, WITH WRISTS AND ELBOWS AWAY FROM MY BODY. I USE A THIRTY-FIVE-OUNCE ASH BAT, THIRTY-FIVE INCHES LONG!

I TAKE A STRAIGHTAWAY OPEN STANCE, ALIGNING MY FEET MIDWAY BETWEEN THE CHALK LINES. I STRIDE FORWARD ON THE PITCH ABOUT SEVEN INCHES, WEIGHT EVENLY BALANCED ON EACH FOOT!



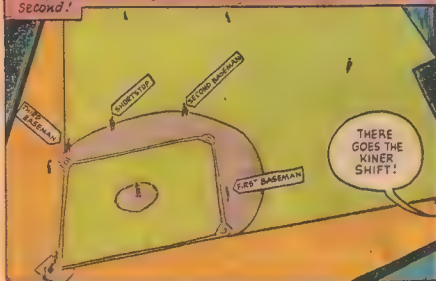
THEN I SHIFT MY WEIGHT ON MY LEFT FOOT, BRINGING MY BAT AROUND IN A QUICK SWING! I MEET THE BALL IN FRONT OF THE PLATE -- TO PULL IT TOWARD LEFT FIELD!

I SWING SLIGHTLY UPWARD, HITTING UNDER THE BALL, THEN FOLLOWING THROUGH. AT THE LAST MOMENT, MY WRIST-SNAP ADDS POWER TO MY BODY PIVOT. AS HANK GREENBERG SAYS: "BE ALERT BUT RELAXED"!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

Hoping to stop Ralph, enemy managers shifted their infields to left, concentrating three fielders between third base and second.



Despite the "Kiner Shift," Ralph lambasted a grand Slam homer in the opening game against Cincinnati!

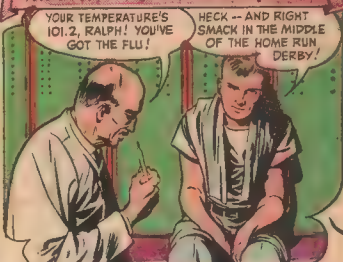
By July 4, he had hit No. 20.

The following day, he hit three homers for the third time in his brief career, a new record!

On August 27, Ralph had crashed thirty-five to Mize's thirty-one!



Ralph clubbed his thirty-eighth homer on Labor Day and was well on his way to a new record! A few days later in Chicago...

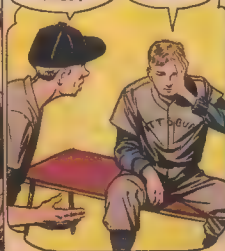


Despite Ralph's illness, he went on the road with the Pirates. They were trailing, 12 to 9, against the Cubs on September 10...

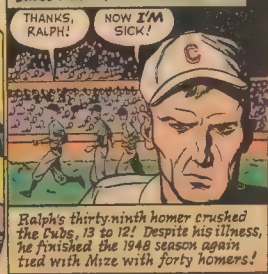


PLEASE, RALPH, COME ON OUT! I WANT TO SEE YOU BEAT JOHNNY MIZE!

ALL RIGHT, JIMMY -- I'LL TRY -- FOR YOU!



Ralph had not held a bat in his hands for a week, but, with the bases loaded, he connected!



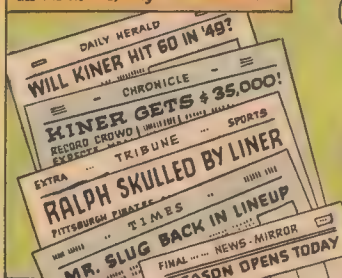
Ralph's thirty-ninth homer crushed the Cubs, 13 to 12! Despite his illness, he finished the 1948 season again tied with Mize with forty homers!

RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

Ralph's 1948 Record:

Hits _____ 147
 Doubles _____ 19
 Triples _____ 5
 Home Runs _____ 40*
 Runs Batted In _____ 123
 Total Bases _____ 296
SLUGGING AVERAGE _____ .533
Batting Average _____ .265
 *TIED WITH MIZE FOR MAJOR LEAGUE HOME RUNS

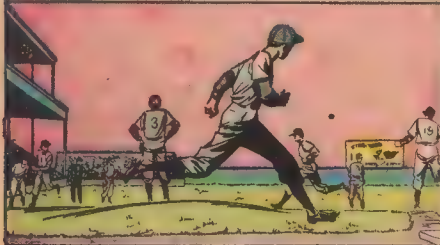
As the next spring rolled around...



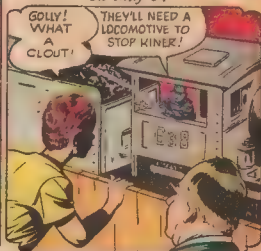
I LOVE THAT MAN!



Ralph lost no time in his 1949 home run drive, exploding a grand slam four-bagger in the opening game against the Reds!



Ralph hit the longest home run in the history of Braves' Field, Boston, on May 9!



GOLLY! WHAT A CLOUT!

THEY'LL NEED A LOCOMOTIVE TO STOP KINER!

And Ralph was collecting the shorter hits, too! On May 16, he led the league with a .366 average!

THAT'S FIVE HITS FOR RALPH TODAY!

I CAN COUNT-- DARN IT!



Picked for the 1949 All-Star Team, Ralph walloped a three-hundred-fifty-foot homer in the sixth with Jackie Robinson on base!

IT'S LOT'S EASIER BEING ON YOUR SIDE, RALPH!



RALPH KINER, HOME RUN KING

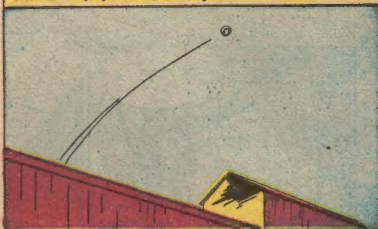
Ralph sank the Dodgers, 8 to 6, on July 19, driving in five runs with his twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth homers!

THERE HE GOES AGAIN, JACKIE!

I SEE HIM ROUNDING SECOND IN MY SLEEP!

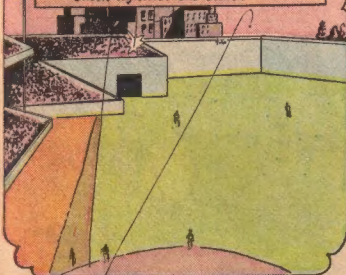


Ralph's fortieth homer went over the centerfield wall at Wrigley Field, Chicago, on September 3. ...



...putting him only three behind Babe Ruth's 1927 record of that day!

In his last two times at bat on September 11, Ralph socked his forty-fifth and forty-sixth against the Cubs!



And in his next two times at bat, on September 13, against the Phils ...

THIS IS GETTING MONOTONOUS!



Ralph was the first slugger in history to blast four homers in four consecutive at-bats **TWICE** ... and eleven homers in thirteen games!

As Ralph returned to the dugout ...

THERE'S THE GREATEST HITTER IN THE WORLD TODAY!



Ralph broke his own 1947 record with his fifty-second homer on September 21, ending the season with fifty-four, only six less than Ruth's 1927 mark!

Ralph's Super-Record . 1949 .

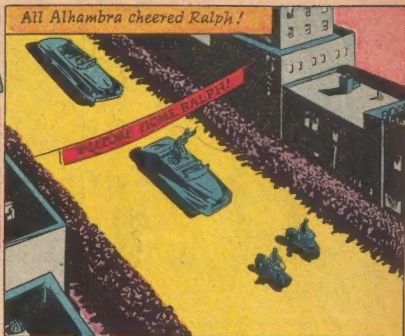
| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Hits | 170 |
| Doubles | 19 |
| Triples | 5 |
| Home Runs | 54 |
| Total Bases | 361 |
| Runs Batted In | 127 |
| SLUGGING AVERAGE | .658 |
| Batting Average | .310 |

* Led League.
* * Fifth in League.

As soon as the season ended, Ralph thought of his beloved mother, who had toiled so hard for him during the years when he was an unknown, untried rookie!

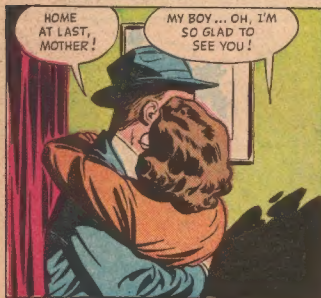
HELLO, MOM...
I'M FLYING
HOME TONIGHT!

All Alhambra cheered Ralph!



HOME
AT LAST,
MOTHER!

MY BOY... OH, I'M
SO GLAD TO
SEE YOU!



NOBODY COOKS
LIKE YOU,
MOM!

AND NOBODY
HAS A BETTER
SON THAN YOU,
RALPH! YOU HAVEN'T
CHANGED
A BIT!



An hour later,
the doorbell rang!
It was the children,
the kid fans who
love Ralph not
only for his heroic
deeds on the diamond,
but for the warmth
of his friendly
smile!

I'VE BEEN WAITING
FOR YOU, BOYS
AND GIRLS!

COME DOWN TO THE
LOT AND SHOW US HOW
TO HIT HOMERS,
RALPH!

WILL YOU MANAGE
OUR TEAM AGAIN
THIS WINTER?



The story of Ralph Kiner does not end here. At only twenty-seven, he is the greatest living batsman, his feet firmly set on the path to Baseball's Hall of Fame! Will he break Babe Ruth's record some day? Those who know him best say he cannot fail!

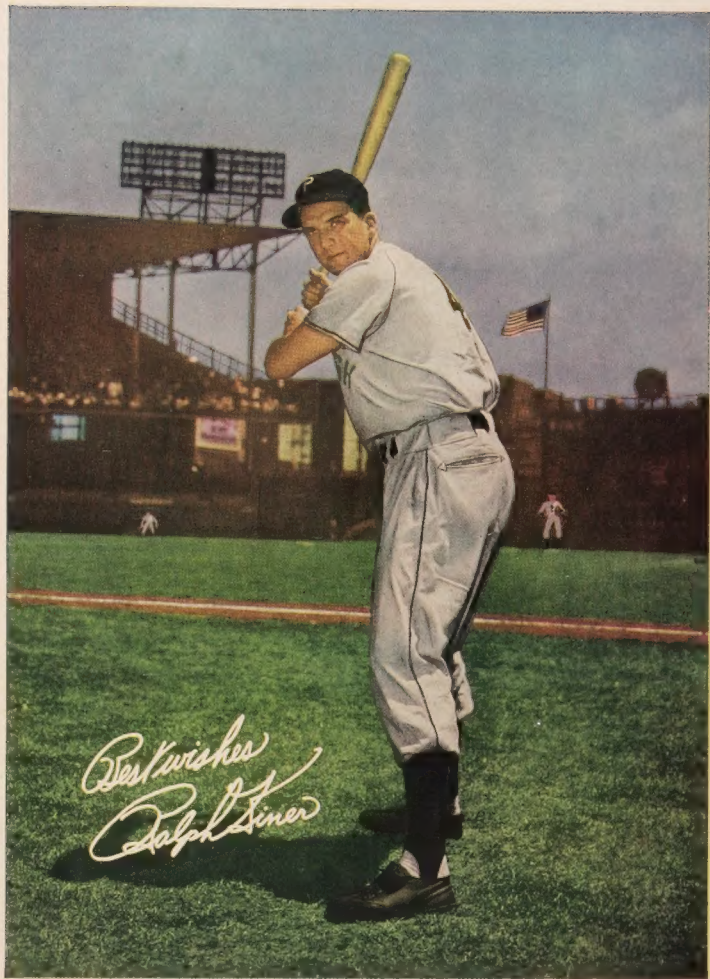
HOME RUN!



**FROM
START..**



**...TO
FINISH**



Best Wishes
Ralph Kiner